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Dimensions of Stimulus Situations Which Account for Behavior Variance Quarterly Status Report 1 July 1963

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Group Psychology Branch
Office of Naval Research

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1. Purpose. The broad goals of this study involve an investigation of stimulus situations encompasing the social and physical aspects of the environment which might account for that portion of behavior variance which cannot presently be predicted from aptitude and personality tests. Two studies are currently in progress to explore taxonomic methodology and to demonstrate the relation of environmental factors related to two dependent variables, the academic performance and career choice of college students. It is hoped that similar investigation along these lines will eventually lead to the development of a measurable taxonomy of environmental variables accounting for a substantial portion of variance in individual and group behavior.

2. Work Accomplished.

(a) <u>Dimensions of Stimulus Situations Relevant to Academic</u>

<u>Achievement and Career Choice of College Students</u>. Information pertaining to social and physical environmental conditions has been collected on a sample of 236 TCU students. The data have been coded and a correlation matrix comprising 186 variables has been

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computed. This matrix includes situational variables as well as aptituted, personality, and interest measures. The correlations among variables have been reviewed carefully, and the matrix prepared for cluster analysis and factor analysis, based on cluster scores computed for individuals. Multiple correlation and multiple regression techniques and multiple discriminant analysis will be utilized to predict the criteria mentioned above.

(b) <u>Dimensions of organizations</u>. The second current study involves an investigation of campus organizations. The Hemphill Group Dimensions Description Questionnaire and a specially designed form surveying the status, participation in group activities, and group identification of individual members, have been administered to a number of TCU campus organizations. Information on 922 individuals belonging to 59 groups has been gathered and the questionnaires are presently being scored. The sample consists of 8 religion groups, 8 honorary societies, 8 departmental clubs, 15 military groups, 10 committees of the student government, 2 athletic teams and 8 fraternities. Upon completion of the scoring and coding procedures, differences in the structure of different types of campus organizations, and differences in the group dimension profiles obtained from high status and low status members will be analyzed. It is hypothesized

that groups falling under the same classification, e.g., religious groups, will tend to have similar organizational profiles as compared to groups listed in other categories, e.g. departmental clubs. Ward's hierarchical grouping method will be utilized to cluster the group profiles obtained through the Hemphill Group Dimensions Description Questionnaire. Concerning the differences in the perceptions of high and low status members; it is postulated that high status members will show more agreement in their description of the group than low status members whose descriptions as regards the group will be more variable.

In relation to the first phase of this study, group variables predictive of individual behavior will be isolated and added to the multiple regression equation predicting the criteria mentioned in (a). It is also planned to estimate group dimensions from information available on the members of the groups: family income, grade point average, personality dimensions, religion. These will be compared with comparable dimensions obtained through the Hemphill Questionnaire.

(c) A survey of the literature related to human ecology and the environmental determinants of behavior has been undertaken, in view of the massive literature relevant to this general problem.

3. Publications and Reports.

- (a) Sells, S. B., editor <u>Stimulus Determinants of Behavior</u>. New York, The Ronald Press Company, 1963. This book presents the principal papers of the symposium conducted as the first phase of this project, in 1961.
- (b) Sells, S. B. Toward a Taxonomy of Organizations. The final manuscript of this paper, presented at the Carnegie Tech symposium in June, 1962, has been sent to Dr. Maynard Shelly for inclusion in a book on Organizations, to be published by John Villey and Sons, Inc.
- (c) Sells, S. B. The significance of the term environment in the behavioral equation. Colloquium talk to the Department of Psychology, University of Illinois, 8 March, 1963.
- (d) Sells, S. B. An interactionist looks at the environment.

 Presidential Address to the Southwestern Psychological Association. 5 April, 1963.

4. Personnel.

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